

## Nurse Staffing Committee Charter Revised September 6, 2018

### Introduction

This document was created in March of 2018 as a collaborative effort between WSHA, SEIU 1199NW, UFCW 21, and WSNA. These organizations came together in early 2018 to develop sample tools that are intended to help hospitals implement House Bill (HB) 1714, which was passed in the previous legislative session. HB 1714 was intended to update and create some accountability around the nurse staffing committee process.

The partners listed above recommend all hospitals have a Nurse Staffing Committee Charter to describe the roles, responsibilities, and processes by which committees function and nurse staffing plans are developed and used. To create the charter, the partners reviewed HB 1714 as well as charters used by a wide variety of hospitals in Washington. The following charter is based on work completed by a previous collaboration of these partners initiated in 2008 and includes changes to that work. Changes based on new best practices are **highlighted in yellow**. Changes based on the requirements spelled out in HB 1714 are **highlighted in green**.

You can find the final bill, which shows the changes/additions from previous law, [here](#).

## Sample Nurse Staffing Committee Charter

Revised September 6, 2018

<b>Committee Name</b>	(insert name of facility) Nurse Staffing Committee
<b>Committee Membership and Leadership</b>	<p>Co-Chair (Staff Registered Nurse Representative): (insert name and title)            Co-Chair (Management Representative): (insert name and title)            Committee Membership:   1. (insert <b>clinical area</b>/unit)              2.              3.              4.              5... etc.</p> <p>The Nurse Staffing Committee will consist of (insert number) members: _____ (insert number) Registered Nurses currently providing direct patient care (one half of the total committee membership) and _____ (insert number) hospital administrative staff (up to one half of the total membership).</p> <p>Each area where nursing care is provided will have the opportunity to provide advice to the Nurse Staffing Committee. These areas will be called to meetings when their attendance is required. Committee meetings are open, and any interested Registered Nurse employed by (insert hospital name) may attend, but only committee members will have a vote.</p> <p>The Nurse Staffing Committee will be co-chaired by one staff Registered Nurse and one management representative. Co-chairs will be selected every two years by the Nurse Staffing Committee.</p> <p>Registered nurse participants will be selected according to the collective bargaining agreement or by their peers if staff are not represented by a union.*</p>
<b>Overall Purpose/ Strategic Objective</b>	<p>The purpose of this Committee is to: protect patients, support greater retention of Registered Nurses, and promote evidence-based nurse staffing by establishing a mechanism whereby direct care nurses and hospital management can participate in a joint process regarding decisions about nurse staffing.</p> <p>The staffing committee has ready access to organizational data pertinent to the analysis of nurse staffing which may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient census and census variance trends</li> <li>• Patient LOS</li> <li>• Nurse Sensitive Outcome indicator data</li> <li>• Quality metrics and adverse event data where staffing may have been a factor</li> <li>• Patient experience data</li> </ul>

\* Under Section 9(a) of Taft-Hartley Act, a union which has been certified or recognized as the representative of the workers in a bargaining unit has the right of exclusive representation for all workers in that unit and has the right to choose the individuals who bargain on its behalf.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff engagement/experience data</li> <li>• Nursing overtime and on-call utilization</li> <li>• Breaks taken, breaks missed</li> <li>• Nursing agency utilization and expense</li> <li>• “Assignment by objection” or other staffing complaint/concern data</li> <li>• Patient utilization trends in those areas where on-call is used</li> <li>• Recruitment, retention, and turn-over data</li> <li>• Education, vacation, and sick time (including leaves of absence, scheduled or unscheduled)</li> </ul> <p>The committee conducts routine surveys to assess the satisfaction of both nurse staffing committee members, and bedside nursing staff, with nurse staffing and with the effectiveness of the staffing committee.</p>
<p><b>Tasks/ Functions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop / produce and oversee the establishment of an annual patient care unit and shift-based nurse staffing plan and staffing plan modifications based on the needs of patients and use this plan as the primary component of the staffing budget.</li> <li>• Provide semi-annual review of the staffing plan against patient need and known evidence-based staffing information, including nurse sensitive quality indicators collected by the hospital.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typical timeline for annual review and validation of staffing plans:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ [Insert months] – committee review every 6 months</li> <li>▪ [Insert months]– Staff input</li> <li>▪ [Insert months] – finalize communication to the CEO</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review, assess, and respond to staffing variations or concerns presented to the committee</li> <li>• Assure that patient care unit annual staffing plans, shift-based staffing, and total clinical staffing are posted on each unit in a public area.</li> <li>• Assure factors are considered and included, but not limited to, the following in the development of staffing plans:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Census, including total numbers of patients on the unit on each shift and activity such as patient discharges, admissions, and transfers</li> <li>○ Level of intensity of all patients and nature of the care to be delivered on each shift</li> <li>○ Skill mix</li> <li>○ Level of experience and specialty certification or training of nursing personnel providing care</li> <li>○ The need for specialized or intensive equipment</li> <li>○ The architecture and geography of the patient care unit, including but not limited to placement of patient rooms, treatment areas, nursing stations, medication preparation areas, and equipment</li> <li>○ Staffing guidelines adopted or published by national nursing professional associations, specialty nursing organizations, and other health professional organizations</li> <li>○ Availability of other personnel supporting nursing services on the unit; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strategies to enable registered nurses to take meal and rest breaks as required by law or collective bargaining agreement.</li> <li>● Evaluate staffing effectiveness against predetermined nurse sensitive metrics collected by Washington hospitals.</li> <li>● Hospital finances and resources as well as defined budget cycle <b>must</b> be considered in the development of the staffing plan.</li> <li>● Develop and implement a process to examine and respond to complaints submitted by a nurse that indicates:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ That the nurse personnel assignment in a patient care unit is not in accordance with the adopted staffing plan; or</li> <li>○ An objection to the shift-to-shift adjustments in staffing levels required by the plan made by the appropriate hospital personnel overseeing patient care operations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Track complaints coming in and the resolution of the complaints.</li> <li>● Make a determination that a complaint is resolved or dismissed based on unsubstantiated data.</li> <li>● Orientation to the staffing committee law is a part of routine hospital orientation.</li> </ul>
<b>Timeline for Outcome Completion</b>	<p>By September 1, 2008, the Nurse Staffing Committee will be established in accordance with Chapter 70.14 Revised Code of Washington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By _____ (date), the Nurse Staffing Committee will have approved the Charter and finalized the membership selection process</li> <li>● By _____ (date), the Nurse Staffing Committee will have reviewed, approved, and submitted unit/area staffing plans to the Chief Executive Officer for approval</li> <li>● By _____ (date), the Nurse Staffing Committee will have reviewed and evaluated all staffing plans using the designated nurse sensitive quality indicators</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting Management</b>	<p><b>Meeting schedule:</b> The Nurse Staffing Committee will meet on a _____ basis. Notices of meeting dates and times will be distributed at least ___ days in advance in order to better accommodate unit scheduling. Participation by a hospital employee shall be on scheduled work time and compensated at the appropriate rate of pay. Members shall be relieved of all other work duties during meetings. Staff Registered Nurse members of the Nurse Staffing Committee will be paid, and preferably will be scheduled to attend meetings as part of their normal full time equivalent hours for the majority of the meetings. It is understood that meeting schedules may require than a Registered Nurse member attend on his/her scheduled day off. In this case, the Registered Nurse may be given equivalent hours off during another scheduled shift.</p> <p><b>Record-keeping/minutes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting agendas will be distributed to all committee members at least one week in advance of each meeting.</li> <li>● The minutes of each meeting will be distributed to all committee members with each meeting agenda, with approval of the minutes as a standing agenda item for each meeting.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A master copy of all agendas and meeting minutes from the Nurse Staffing Committee minutes will be maintained and available for review on request.</li> </ul> <p><b>Attendance requirements and participation expectations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members are expected to attend at least 80 percent of the meetings held each year. Failure to meet attendance expectations may result in removal from the committee.</li> <li>• If a member needs to be excused, requests for an excused absence are communicated to _____. Failure to request an excused absence will result in attendance recorded as “absent” in the meeting minutes.</li> <li>• Replacement will be in accordance with aforementioned selection processes.</li> <li>• It is the expectation of the Nurse Staffing Committee that all members will participate actively, including reading required materials in advance of the meeting as assigned, coming prepared to meetings, and engaging in respectful dialogue as professional committee members.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision-making process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus will normally be used as the decision-making model.</li> <li>• Should a particular issue need to be voted upon by the committee, the action must be approved by a majority vote of the full committee (not just the majority of the members present at a particular meeting).</li> </ul>
<p><b>New Staff Committee Requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing committee members will go through formal education/orientation prior to joining the committee.</li> <li>• If possible, staff are encouraged to attend at least 1 meeting and review charter prior to committing.</li> </ul>